

Sexism Is Alive and Well In The Media

By Mary Dorman,
District Leader 75 AD

The Equal Rights Amendment never passed; either on a federal level or in New York State. The law is reflective of social values. Sexism remains alive and well today both in the United States and in New York State.

I am thrilled to have a chance to vote for a woman as President of the United States in my lifetime. In theory, the United States offers an individual an opportunity to be judged on her or his merit: not class, gender, ethnicity or religion. In fact, the media consistently demeans and degrades women with sweeping general depictions, as well as lately focusing its sexism on a single woman: Hillary Clinton.

Blatant examples of sexist depictions of women dominated commercials broadcast during the 2008 Super Bowl. One ad that I found extremely offensive was for Planter's Peanuts. It was an animation of an "ugly" girl, who in spite of her looks, was irresistible to men because she smelled of Planter's Peanuts.

I thought: is there such a thing as an ugly boy? No—he would be a "nerd" and a nerd has the redeeming quality of being smart. Advertisers paid a fortune for 30-second commercials, knowing their message would reach hundreds of millions of consumers. The National Organization for Women Foundation monitored these ads nationally. Among the results they found: there were more animals in the ads than women; women were virtually non-existent

in speaking roles, and they were depicted as passive.

Hillary Clinton has borne the brunt of sexism in the media. The "news" evaluates what she is wearing, how she looks, talks and laughs. The same behavior that signals a man as tough and strong depicts Senator Clinton as icy, rigid and lacking in warmth. He shows compassion, she shows weakness.

Examples of Hillary bashing:

*Maureen Dowd,
New York Times: 2/12/08:*

Relaying a joke told by Penn Jillette, "Obama is just creaming Hillary. You know, all these primaries, you know. And Hillary says its not fair, because they're being held in February, and February is Black History Month. And unfortunately for Hillary there's no White Bitch Month."

*Bill Kristol,
(New York Times columnist)
panelist on Fox News Sunday,
February 3, 2008.*

"Look, the only people for Hillary Clinton are the Democratic establishment and white women... White women are a problem, that's you know... We all live with that." He later apologized.

On Sunday, February 24, 2008, Newsday ran a picture of Hillary Clinton from 1975 with a tag line to the effect that it was a picture of her when she "...was appointed to

GENERAL MEETING

THURSDAY

MARCH 20 • 7:00 PM

Hudson Guild
441 West 26th Street
(btwn 9th & 10th Aves.)

AGENDA

"GOING FOR A RIDE"

A public forum on the sad state of the bus and subway service.

**Guest Speaker:
Andrew Albert**

**Chair of NYC Riders Council
Since 1988, Public member of
the MTA Board**

Club Business to follow.

defend a rapist of a 14-year-old girl." Unbelievable! The media clearly implied that she was happy to or in the business of defending rapists, much less rapists of children! In fact, the courts appoint attorneys to such cases of indigent criminal defendants and one is required to take any such assignment!

You would think that there would be more general outrage at the manipulation of Hillary Clinton by the media; it serves no one. It is time to insist on fairness and facts in reporting.

St Vincent's Redevelopment Plan—An Opportunity For Affordable Housing?

By Gloria Sukenick, CRDC Housing Committee Chair

At last! Words of hope re: St. Vincent's Hospital—a redevelopment plan and the opportunity to develop permanently affordable housing as part of that plan.

Two very credible voices in the struggle for creation and maintenance of affordable housing were heard from in a letter to the editor of *Chelsea Now* that was nothing short of inspiring. Asked by the Village Independent Democrats Club to look into the possibility of including affordable housing as part of the St. Vincent's plan, Brad Lander, Pratt Center for Community Development, and Harvey Epstein, Urban Justice Center, Community Development, came up with workable solutions.

They state: "The developer may say it is not financially feasible to build affordable housing; however this is simply untrue. There are numerous ways to include affordable housing while respecting the context of the surrounding community and still generate several hundred million dollars for the...hospital development.... publicly supported programs are available, such as low-income housing tax credits, tax-exempt bonds, Battery Park City Revenues, 421-a property tax exemptions, private financing through union pensions and the new \$400 million Housing Opportunity Fund announced by Governor Spitzer last week."

And, they add: "The real question is whether St. Vincent's believes that creation of affordable housing is a priority. Including affordable housing units might modestly decrease the sales price...the hospital is reportedly expecting to receive. If it wants to balance the hospital's redevelopment needs, the preservation goals of the surrounding community, and the opportunity to create affordable housing, St. Vincent's can take a modest amount less in acquisition price, slightly increase its capital campaign and debt financing, and still create a building that enables longtime residents to continue to call this neighborhood home."

I would add that since hospitals do not receive adequate public funding to maintain and upgrade their facilities in order to serve the community, the alternative is, of course, working with a for-profit developer, who, obviously, is in business to make a profit! Though Rudin claims to have community concerns, some give-back to the community by adding affordable housing to their plan would certainly prove the point and promote support for the redevelopment. Suggestions are welcome!

So there you go, it is in the realm of possibility that, with some compromises on either side, the opportunity for a much needed, up-to-date hospital, reaching community

goals and creating permanently affordable housing while keeping it financially feasible for Rudin, the developer, is not just a pipe dream, but a step toward keeping New York diverse, affordable and available to all of us.

Keep fighting!

CRDC Members on Hand for Induction of Justice Feinman

By Roving Reporter

A standing room only crowd filled the ceremonial courtroom of the State Supreme Court building on January 31 to witness the induction of newly elected Supreme Court Justice Paul G. Feinman. Justice Feinman was elected to the Supreme Court last November replacing longtime justice Jacqueline Silberman, who had reached the mandatory retirement under the state constitution.

Many CRDC members were on hand for the celebration. In fact, in his remarks Paul thanked CRDC for their longtime support and singled out several club members for special recognition, including Doris Corrigan, Mary Dorman, Tom Schuler (who served as the master of ceremonies for the program), Lynn Kotler, Marc Krasnow, Maarten de Kadt and Steven Skyles Mulligan. In addition to Tom Schuler, Senator Tom Duane and Council Speaker Christine Quinn spoke, offering praise and extending to Paul best wishes in his new role.

River to River: Stand Up for Peace

On Saturday, March 22nd, UFPJ will sponsor a "stand-up" along 14th Street from Avenue A to 11th Avenue.

People will begin lining up at 11:30am. At 1:00 pm, all participants will march along 14th Street to 5th Avenue and Washington Square Park. The stand-up is to mark the fifth anniversary of the beginning of the War on Iraq.

Chelsea Neighbors United to End the War is asking our neighbors from Chelsea to join us on 14th Street between 8th and 9th Avenue.

If you have questions, please drop by our weekly stand-up each Tuesday at the north-west corner of 24th Street and 8th Avenue from 6:00 pm–7:00 pm.

President's Corner

By President Lynn Kotler

It has been over one month since I took office as president. In such a short time, we have accomplished many things.

On February 5th, Super Tuesday, our District Leaders, Mary Dorman and Tom Schuler and I visited a majority of polling sites in our district. Voter turnout reached record numbers in the majority of election districts. Our next goal is to reach out to our community residents and get all registered Democrats in our election district out to vote.

Many of you have expressed a desire for our club to be more social, and so far we have had two pizza parties: one after closing the polls on Super Tuesday and the other when we watched the presidential debate held in Texas. All had a good time, and I hope to see many more of you at our next gathering.

The Membership Committee has unveiled its "Lunch Box Series." The "Lunch Box Series" will be informal meetings at a local restaurant where an invited elected official gathers with members to discuss issues relevant to us.

I am pleased to inform you that New York Democratic Committee Co-Chair Dave Pollack has agreed to be our first speaker on April 13, 2008. Don't forget to check our website for details.

District Leaders Mary Dorman and Tom Schuler have enthusiastically agreed to chair our 50th Anniversary Committee. Mary and Tom are diligently planning for this festive occasion. Let Mary or Tom know if you are interested in helping them plan this event. They are looking for volunteers.

We are always looking for ways to attract new members and for creative, interesting events. If you have any ideas, please drop us a note or an e-mail. We would love to hear from you. Go Dems!

Congestion Pricing Plan Inches Forward

By Andrew Berman, CRDC Executive Committee

With approval by a state commission in January, congestion pricing in New York, like London and Stockholm, have moved one step closer to reality. Congestion pricing would charge an additional fee for vehicles entering Manhattan south of 60th Street, with the money collected earmarked for mass transit.

Congestion pricing is long overdue, given the terrible environmental, health, and quality-of-life impacts of the ever-growing number of motor vehicles entering the

lower half of Manhattan, and I am generally for anything that improves and encourages use of mass transit over private vehicles. But the plan without a doubt has warts, some of which seem to emanate from it's being more geared towards relieving traffic impacts upon big businesses than upon people in our neighborhoods.

Fortunately, some of the more objectionable elements of the Mayor's original plan have now been removed, such as a \$4 fee for residents moving their car even short distances within the congestion pricing zone, and the need to install license plate-reading cameras on nearly every corner of the zone in order to enforce the fee system. But the plan continues to include a discount for bridge and tunnel fees; so if you pay \$8 (as you soon will) to take the Holland or Lincoln Tunnels, into Manhattan, you would pay no additional congestion pricing fee for entering the zone. This means the impact upon West Side tunnel traffic will be minimized, even though it's some of the worst and most polluting traffic to be found anywhere. It also means, bizarrely, that drivers from New Jersey will arguably gain advantage in the plan, as compared to drivers from Upper Manhattan and the five boroughs. Fees would also only be charged daytimes on weekdays, though as anyone who's ever been on Ninth Avenue in Hell's Kitchen, or on Canal Street knows, tunnel traffic is often at its worst on weekends.

In spite of these flaws, congestion pricing is a step forward, even if its primary focus is businesses rather than people. Through the upcoming approval process and once the plan is implemented, hopefully we can eliminate some of these exemptions to make a more just and effective congestion pricing system.

Chelsea Waterside Park Association Annual Meeting March 19, 2008

Meeting starts at 6:00 pm with a Reception and Refreshments, followed by CWPA's annual election.

Guest Speaker: Diana Taylor,
Chair of the Hudson River Park Trust.
"Sharing Space in a Crowded Place"

Held at the German Lutheran Evangelical St. Paul's Church, 315 West 22nd St. (8 & 9 Aves.)

Everyone is welcome!

Go Green East Harlem Cookbook Hits the Shelves

*By Scott M. Stringer,
Manhattan Borough President*

In January my *Go Green East Harlem Cookbook* was published, a multicultural feast for the eyes, as well as the palette. With recipes contributed by East Harlem's greatest restaurateurs and community residents, and gorgeous photographs by a group of International Center of Photography grads, the book beautifully portrays the community that inspired it.

The bilingual cookbook features healthy recipes for appetizers, soups, salads, entrees and—yes—desserts. It is the latest of my “Go Green East Harlem” initiatives, which to date include, thanks to Mayor Bloomberg, a new \$3.5 million state-of-the-art asthma center that will open this spring, the planting of hundreds of

street trees, a new farmers' market on 106th Street, and a “green building” conference for developers, planners and community advocates which was held in October.

The excitement and ownership that residents feel about the cookbook comes from the sense that we truly can improve our lives through the choices we make—from what we put in our bodies to how we advocate for crucial changes like better air quality. Just as the cookbook reflects the community, Go Green East Harlem is led by a steering committee of neighborhood residents, civic, environmental and business leaders, public health advocates and elected officials.

Steering Committee member Dr. Adam Aponte, whose advice

on weight loss is featured in the cookbook, has pointed out that some parts of East Harlem have more fast food restaurants than supermarkets or produce stands. As a result, at North General Hospital, doctors have begun seeing seven-year-olds who are developing diabetes. That is a fully preventable tragedy, one at which this cookbook directly takes aim.

*Borough President Scott Stringer
checking out the fruit.*

